apprentices are not absorbed in Railways; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Railways are recruiting apprentices as per the provisions of the Act. In so far as absorption is concerned there is no obligation on the part of the employer to provide appointment to trained apprentices. However, in matters of recruitment, instructions have been issued that other things being equal, preference should be given to trained apprentices over others.

बीकानेर-जयपुर रेल लाइन को जोड़ने के लिए उपमार्ग का निर्माण

4552. **श्री सुंदर सिंह भंडारी:** क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि जयपुर से जोधपुर और जयपुर से बीकानेर तक मेड़ता रोड से रेल मार्ग का अंतर केवल 69 किलोमीटर है;

(ख) दोनों सिटी एक्सप्रेस गाड़ियों के पहुंचने के समय में डेढ़ घंटे का अंतर होने का क्या कारण है;

(ग) क्या सरकार ने मेड़ता रोड स्टेशन के बाहर उपमार्ग बनाकर बीकानेर-जयपुर रेल लाइनों को जोड़ने के सुझाव पर गौर किया है; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो इस कार्य को कब तक शुरू किये जाने की संभावना है?

रेल मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सतपाल महाराज): (क) जी हां।

(ख) परिचालनिक कारणों के अलावा वे भिन्न-भिन्न मार्गों एवं भिन्न-भिन्न समय पर चलती है।

(ग) जी हां।

(घ) कार्य शुरू कर दिया गया है और 1997-98 में पूरा हो जाएगा।

Detachment of AC Coaches Nellai Express

4553. SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the AC coaches of Nellai Express have been detached;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to re-attach AC coaches on the said train?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Due to lack of traffic justification.

(c) No, Sir.

Railway Divisional Office at Badarpur in Assam

4554. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the long-drawn agitation going on in Barak Valley in Assam, demanding Railway Divisional Office at Badarpur; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to establish a Railway Divisional Office at Badarpur to meet the demand of the people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. After examining all issues the Government has decided to set up 8 new divisions at Agra, Pune, Ranchi, Raipur, Rangiya, Guntur, Singrauli and Ahmedabad